

was that they had favoured the Lollards. Their various acts of contumacy during the last few weeks were recounted in detail. Bygge had been heard to applaud strong words against the Catholic doctrine of the Sacrament. Yet although he had gone great lengths in the safe and congenial atmosphere of Oxford, his courage oozed rapidly away when he stood before the Bishops. His disbelief in Transubstan-tiation was not long-lived. He had joined in repudiating Wycliffe's thesis on the Eucharist when it first appeared, and he now again and finally rejected such errors. His Lollardry was as the seed that fell upon stony places ; it sprang up quickly in a shallow soil and withered in a moment before the sun of authority. He asked pardon on his knees, and was forgiven at the special request of William of Wykeham. He was sent back to Oxford with a new mandate. Wycliffe, Hereford, Bepyngham and others were to be suspended from all teaching and preaching. Bygge hinted that he might find it difficult to enforce such a decree. ' Then the University is the favourer of heresy,' sternly replied Courtenay, ' if it does not permit Catholic truths to be published.' It must be added that the Chancellor found State as well as Church arrayed against him. On the 13th he had been summoned before the King's Council and solemnly enjoined to obey the episcopal decrees.¹ Unwillingly did he return to Oxford on this hard mission. No sooner was his foot on the High Street than courage returned. The seculars were mad with rage at the orders he brought, and ' only the regulars took the side of the Church.' So far from imposing silence on the Lollards, the Chancellor suspended one of their chief enemies, a monk called Henry Crumpe, from teaching in the schools. But this resistance was destined to prove futile, for the Church was armed with the power of the State. The University authorities had now bitter reason to regret that they had not, of late years, cultivated the friendship of the Crown. So far from caring to maintain the independent position of Oxford, the rulers of the country looked on it with suspicion. Five years before, some undergraduates had sung lampoons under the lodging

¹ *Fasc. Z.* 304-11,*